A Study of Employee Motivation Practices in Fast Food Sector

A Synopsis

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Supervised by

Dr. Mini Amit Arrawatia

Submitted by

JV'n Sakshi

Department of Management & Commerce

Faculty of Management & Humanities

Jayoti Vidyapeeth Women's University

Jaipur (Rajasthan), India

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Introduction

The fast food industry has contributed nationally to U.S. economic growth; however, increasing employee turnover rates have become the main concern of many fast food managers (Batt et al., 2014; Dike, 2012). The turnover in the fast food industry is high compared to other industries (Dike, 2012;). Employees' voluntary withdrawal from a workplace occurs because of (a) low wages and benefits, (b) lack of training, (c) autonomy, (d) job opportunities, (e) lack of support from management, (f) and from unfavorable working conditions (Batt et al., 2014; Royle, 2005). Employee turnover is both disruptive and costly to employers, involving increased direct and indirect costs (Batt et al., 2014; French, 2014;). The rising number of voluntary withdrawals has caused many fast food managers to experience the hardship of replacing the quitters. The fast food industry is popular for havinglow skilled-labor that discourages highly skilled workers from applying for vacant positions (Batt et al., 2014; Kwon, 2014). Fast food restaurants primarily hire students with less experience or no experience that implies highly skilled workers are over qualified.

Employee turnover has an effect on employee efficiency that influences business financial performance in a negative fashion.The lack of organizational support, work socialization, and employee involvement creates isolation among employees, which results in lower productivity and effectiveness (DiPietro & Strate, 2008). Employee turnover is caused by lack of employee training, which affects employee competence (Perez & Mirabella, 2013). Employee incompetence affects the quality service of the fast food restaurants and thus diminishes the frequency of positive customer experiences (Harrington, Ottenbacher, Staggs, & Powell, 20)

Job satisfaction is the extent to which an employee is happy with his/her job. This can help to improve an employee's positive attitude towards work. Stone (2005:413) has stated that job satisfaction is the degree to which employees have positive attitudes towards their jobs. According to Locke (1976), cited in Fulford (2005:74), job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. As aforementioned, employee turnover in the fast food industry is at a record high due to job dissatisfaction. Absenteeism has also multiplied owing to work related stress, as jobs

in the industry are monotonous and not often rotated to develop their skills and performance, could bring about ultimate job satisfaction (Ukpere, 2007). Ivancevich (2007) interjected that there should be a feeling of the right job so that employees can be productive, since workers spend one-third of their day at work and, therefore, require a good working conditions, working environment and co-operative coworkers in order to be comfortable in the workplace (Charner & Fraser, 2003). To keep employees satisfied, there must be for good remuneration, medical aid and fringe benefits in order to deliver good quality services. Employees tend to produce good quality work and good customer services when they are satisfied and motivated. Unsatisfied workers will result in high absenteeism, low quality outputs and high rate of employee turnover (Ivancevich, 2007). Poor satisfaction of worker may be as a result of poor working conditions, less fringe benefits, autocratic management style, and etcetera. Such vices have adverse implications on employee performance in the workplace, particularly in the fast food industry. Thus, job satisfaction has been recognised as an important factor in the fast food industry to ameliorate the negative attitudes of employees towards their job or organization.

Need of the Research

Application of motivational practices is changing the way and thus has significant implications for the way organisations manage their human resource functions. Although the impact of motivational practices on work and employment has been the subject of research, little attention has been paid to its effect on work organisation, employees performance and management.

Through this research the research attempts to find out major barriers, imperative characteristics and suggestions on the basis of well supported research data. It will also focus on various motivational practices involved in the field of fast food industry. Qualitative and quantitative research analysis has been considered for the purpose of data analysis.

Objectives of the study:

Objectives of the research work are as follows:

(1) To analyze the factors affecting the motivation of the employees within the fast food industry.

(2) To analyze the relevance of motivation practices in the management of employees in the fast food outlets.

(3) To identify and study the problems of employees and HR in fast food companies.

(4) To suggest ways of improving motivation and employees' performance in the fast food industry.

Review of literature

The literature review examines topics including Herzberg's (1959, 1974) motivation-hygiene theory consisted with the primary theoretical framework for the study. Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs and the Hackman and Oldhams' (1976) job characteristics model, including strengths, limitations, and weaknesses of other theories, and the reasons why Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory was the priority theoretical framework. Other topics include the psychometrical scales such as Job Satisfaction Scales (JSS) and Job Descriptive Index (JDI), including their established reliability and validity properties that were used as a guide for choosing the right scale for this study. The other parts of the literature review include the variables used for the study such as job satisfaction independent variables and job dissatisfaction independent variables, and the dependent variable turnover intentions. The job satisfaction independent variables were (a) achievement, (b) recognition, (c) responsibility, (d) work-itself, and (e) advancement and growth (Herzberg, 1974; Herzberg et al., 1959). The job dissatisfaction independent variables were (a) company policy, (b) supervision, (c) interpersonal relationships, (d) working conditions, and (e) salary (Herzberg, 1974; Herzberg et al., 1959). Each variable tracked in this study had empirical support from different fields of research to support the relationship between variables. Other related topics described in this section are employee turnover, causes of turnover, and implications of the turnover, employee engagement, commitment, and employee retention

Herzberg investigated the question: "what do people want from their jobs?" (Swanepoel *et al.*, 2003). There are different variables that can make people feel either good or bad about their jobs. These factors were indicated by Herzberg as intrinsic and extrinsic factors, which is where the name two factors theories originated from. The intrinsic factors include advancement, recognition, responsibility and achievement, while the extrinsic factors comprise of status, security, company policy, administration, remuneration, supervision, and interpersonal relations, which are referred to by Herzberg as "hygiene" factors. These latter factors do not motivate employees, although they should be present in the work place to placard them. Employees are motivated by internal values rather than external values. Hence, motivation should be internally generated through those intrinsic factors, which are known as "motivators". Swanepoel *et al* remark that job satisfaction is a function of challenging, stimulating activities or work content called the variable of motivators, while job

dissatisfaction is a function of the job context called the hygiene factors. Herzberg believed that the opposite of "satisfaction" is "no satisfaction", and the opposite of "dissatisfaction" is "no dissatisfaction" and, therefore, by removing the dissatisfies from a job will not make the job satisfying (Robbins &Judge, 2009). Managers who seek to remove those factors that lead to job dissatisfaction may bring about peace, but not motivation. Hence, instead of motivating their own workforce, may end up placating them. Herzberg suggested pay and working conditions as part of the hygiene factors that could nullify the motivating effects of satisfiers such as promotion, prospects, recognition, and personal growth". Therefore, fast food outlets should not rely only on monetary incentives in terms of satisfying their employees, since money alone will not improve employees' satisfaction and up performance. Therefore, there is a need to complement intrinsic with extrinsic motivation elements, in order to achieve organizational effectiveness and employee commitment.

Advancement and growth is one of the job satisfaction factors. Advancement and growth refer to learning new things to enhance (on the job training) employee's competence (Herzberg et al., 1959). Advancement and growth can achieve by training. Employees with proper and sufficient training are competent to do the assigned job. Herzberg et al. asserted with proper and effective training, employees can grow and advance their career. Salary and relationship with employees are hygiene factors or job dissatisfaction factors (Herzberg et al., 1959). Lumadi (2014) used the theory of Herzberg's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory for the exploration of factors that promote dissatisfaction for many teachers to implement the new school curriculum. Lumadi (2014) found some factors that influence employee job dissatisfaction such as job security, training, job responsibility, and curriculum transformation process. Lumadi (2014) added that empowering employees can promote new effective school curriculum. Research findings include the suggestion that employees must have an active participation in school transformation process including in decision-making (Lumadi, 2014).

Research Methodology

This pertains to the collection of data and information so that they may be analyzed and right decisions on the problem statement may be made. This may include collecting the data by the way of interviews, surveys, newspapers etc. What needs to be kept in mind is, which data is vital for the research and which data is not.

The sample which is collected must be nicely segregated in Primary and Secondary data. Here how wise the researcher is, that plays a pivotal role. He/She must be able to wisely analyze and segregate what data must be used as Secondary and Primary.

Primary data is the data that the researcher has collected for the sole of his study of problem statement. It is collected after the researcher has studied a lot of secondary research that has been done on the study problem. This is collected by questionnaires, interviews, by the researchers own observations etc. The advantages of collecting primary data are as follows-

- The study of the problem statement becomes better.
- The data collected is very recent and specific.
- The collector is the owner of the data collected.

Secondary date pertains to the data which is read or collected by the researchers for the sole purpose to collect 'Good To Know' information. This kind of data is collected by someone else, may be for some other purpose, but may help in the study of the problem statement. This could be collected by censuses survey, information collected by government departments, organizational records and data that was originally collected for other research purposes. The advantages of collecting secondary data are as follows-

- Saves time.
- Easily accessible.
- Saves money as easy to get.
- Gives a broader view of the issue prevailing.

According to Sidhu (1998), "Research is a systematic method of exploring, analyzing & conceptualizing social life in order to extend, correct or verify knowledge aids in the construction of a theory or in the practice of an art".

The focus of this study is on the fast food outlets in New Delhi. The research methods used were a combination of the qualitative and quantitative methods, which is also referred to as triangulation. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed to the 250 samples selected, out of which 200 of them responded. The selected sample composed of all the staff members that have at least six (6) months of work experience within the fast food industry, in order to enhance the reliability of information obtained. In addition, before the floating of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted with few staff members and managers of some fast food outlets, and some corrections were made before the questionnaires were distributed to the wider audience. This measure helped to enhance the reliability and validity of the instrument. In addition, open-ended, semi-structured interviews were conducted on a face-to-face basis with senior and store managers of the different fast food outlets, in order to ascertain their various opinions regarding job satisfaction of employees. A high ethical standard was as well maintained as far as data collection was concerned.

- Sample Size- 200
- Location- New Delhi, India

Hypothesis

(1) Highly motivated employees are more efficient than less motivated employees.
(2) There is significant relationship between motivation and job involvement.
(3) There is significant relationship between personal factors and job involvement.

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